

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing a high-bulk density detergent composition having a bulk density of 650 g/L or more, comprising the steps of:
  - (A) blending a liquid acid precursor of an anionic surfactant with a water-soluble, alkali inorganic substance in an amount equal to or exceeding an amount necessary for neutralizing the liquid acid precursor, in a substantial absence of an alkali metal aluminosilicate, thereby neutralizing the liquid acid precursor, and carrying out step (B) after neutralizing the liquid acid precursor; and
  - (B) adding an inorganic powder and a liquid binder to a neutralization mixture in step (A) after a point of initiation of formation of coarse grains of the neutralization mixture obtained during a course of a neutralization process in step (A) and mixing a resulting mixture, wherein the inorganic powder is added to the neutralization mixture prior to the addition of the liquid binder to the neutralization mixture, and then the inorganic powder is added to the neutralization mixture after the addition of the liquid binder to the neutralization mixture; and wherein the inorganic powder is added to the neutralization mixture in step (B) in an amount of 8 to 50% by weight of the high-bulk density detergent composition, which is the final product.
2. (Original) The process according to claim 1, wherein the addition of the inorganic powder is initiated in step (B) at any time between a point when the liquid acid precursor of an anionic surfactant is added in an amount exceeding a weight ratio of 0.25 to the water-soluble, alkali inorganic substance and a point up to 5 minutes from termination of addition of an entire amount of the liquid acid precursor.

3. (Original) The process according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the average particle size of the inorganic powder is 30  $\mu\text{m}$  or less.

4. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the inorganic powder is an alkali metal aluminosilicate.

5. (Original) The process according to claim 4, wherein the addition of the alkali metal aluminosilicate is initiated in step (B) at any time within 5 minutes from termination of addition of an entire amount of the liquid acid precursor of an anionic surfactant.

6. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the alkali metal aluminosilicate is contained in step (A) in an amount of 5% by weight or less.

7. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the neutralization step is carried out in step (A) while blowing a gas.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 1 or 2, further comprising a surface-modifying step.

10. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing a high-bulk density detergent composition having a bulk density of 650 g/L or more, comprising the steps of:

- (a) blending a liquid acid precursor of an anionic surfactant with a water-soluble, alkali inorganic substance in an amount equal to or exceeding an amount necessary for neutralizing the liquid acid precursor, in a substantial absence of an alkali metal aluminosilicate, thereby neutralizing the liquid acid precursor, and carrying out step (b) after neutralizing the liquid acid precursor; and
- (b) adding an alkali metal aluminosilicate and a liquid binder to a neutralization mixture obtained in step (a) and mixing a resulting mixture, wherein the alkali metal aluminosilicate is added to the neutralization mixture prior to the addition of the liquid binder to the neutralization mixture, and then the ~~inorganic powder alkali metal aluminosilicate~~ is added to the neutralization mixture after the addition of the liquid binder to the neutralization mixture; and wherein the alkali metal aluminosilicate is added to the neutralization mixture in step (B) in an amount of 8 to 50% by weight of the high-bulk density detergent composition, which is the final product.

11. (Original) The process according to claim 10, wherein the addition of the alkali metal aluminosilicate is initiated in step (b) at any time within 5 minutes from termination of addition of an entire amount of the liquid acid precursor of an anionic surfactant.

12. (Original) The process according to claim 10 or 11, wherein the alkali metal aluminosilicate is contained in step (a) in an amount of 5% by weight or less.

13. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 10 or 11, wherein the neutralization step is carried out in step (a) while blowing a gas.

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 10 or 11, further comprising a surface-modifying step.

16. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 1, wherein the inorganic powder is a zeolite.

17. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 10, wherein the alkali metal aluminosilicate is a zeolite.

18. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 1, wherein multiple additions of the inorganic powder occur, with at least one of the multiple additions being prior to the addition of the liquid binder to the neutralization mixture and at least one of the multiple additions being after the addition of the liquid binder to the neutralization mixture.

19. (Currently Amended) The process according to claim 10, wherein multiple additions of the alkali metal aluminosilicate occur, with at least one of the multiple additions being prior to the addition of the liquid binder to the neutralization mixture and at least one of the multiple additions being after the addition of the liquid binder to the neutralization mixture.